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ABSTRACT

This 5-volume directory describes more than 1,200 discretionary grants and contracts supported by the Research to Practice Division of the Office of Special Education Programs. The projects are grouped into sections representing the seven program areas of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (1997), Part D. This volume, the fifth of the directory, describes projects designed to assist state educational agencies and their partners in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transitional services including their systems for professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices. The 46 projects are grouped by funding competitions and include information on grant number, title, project director, beginning and ending dates, and contact information. An abstract usually describes the project's purpose, proposed method, and proposed products. Four indexes are provided: (1) a project director index; (2) an organization index; (3) a state index; and (4) a subject index. (CR)

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ED 450 511

DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY
THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS UNDER
THE *INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT*

FISCAL YEAR 2000

# STATE IMPROVEMENT

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DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY
THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
UNDER THE *INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT*

FISCAL YEAR 2000

# STATE IMPROVEMENT


PREPARED BY
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THE ERIC/OSEP SPECIAL PROJECT
ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON DISABILITIES AND GIFTED EDUCATION
THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN



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# STATE IMPROVEMENT

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This directory, which is presented in five separately published sections, describes over 1,000 discretionary grants and contracts supported by the Research to Practice Division of the Office of Special Education Programs, which administers the discretionary programs authorized by the 1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Some of the projects were funded under the provisions of the orignial IDEA, but for the purposes of this directory, they are grouped into five sections representing the seven program areas of the newly authorized IDEA, Part D:

1: **Research, Innovation and Evaluation** (which covers two programs: *Research and Innovation* and *Studies and Evaluations*)

2: **Personnel Preparation**

3: **Technical Assistance, Dissemination, and Parent Information** (which covers two programs: *Technical Assistance and Dissemination* and *Parent Training and Information*)

4: **Technology and Media Services**

5: **State Improvement**

This section of the directory, "State Improvement," presents projects designed to assist state educational agencies and their partners in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transitional services, including their systems for professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices, to improve results for children with disabilities.

Within this section of the directory, the projects are grouped by the competitions under which they were funded. Within each competition, the projects are arranged in order from the earliest to the most recent. Access to the project information is enhanced by several indexes, which include:

- Project Director Index
- Organization Index
- State Index
- Subject Index

# 84.158A
# State Systems for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

*Grant Number:* H158A960001

## Missouri Transition Access Project

*Project Director:* Parsons, Deborah; Wooderson, Steve
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Div. of Special Ed & Vocational Rehab
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-526-0229

*Beginning Date: 8/01/96*
*Ending Date: 7/31/01*

*Purpose:* The Missouri Transition Alliance Project seeks to enhance the transition of school to work for students with disabilities to assure that comprehensive services (both employment and independent skills) are accessed through the interagency, community, and consumer collaboration in the planning process.

*Method:* The project will create a regional network to provide leadership, training, and capacity building. It will coordinate a participatory structure at the state level that will interact with the Missouri School-to-Work Initiative to effect policy and practice change and result in improving the transition of students with disabilities from school to work.

*Products:* Through the project's network, transition activities throughout the childhood of students with disabilities will be improved. Assuring implementation of transition activities at the local level, the project will enhance student outcomes.

---

*Grant Number:* H158A960002

## Transition - Independence - Employment (R.I. - T.I.E.)

*Project Director:* Stott, Thomas
Rhode Island Department of Education
22 Westminster Street, Shepard Building
Providence, RI 02903
401-222-4600

*Beginning Date:* 9/01/96
*Ending Date:* 8/31/01

*Purpose:* The Rhode Island Transition Project is designed to create and coordinate an environment in the state where students and families are encouraged, supported, and assisted in choosing and planning their futures, moving toward independence, and achieving full community integration in living, working, and socializing.

*Method:* The project will coordinate a system to compile, analyze, and disseminate accessible information for parents and students about their rights and resources in the community related to transition planning. Training opportunities and other forums will bring together parents, teachers,

students, providers, and employers to improve the system. Technical assistance, advocacy, and skill building will be provided to help students and families negotiate the system.

*Products:* The project intends to create better connected systems of services and the means to manage those services. It hopes to establish permanent and accessible resources to support transition efforts and to establish local responsibility for the specifics of transition planning. Real partnerships can be founded which will provide some of the practical details of adult life for students and which will empower parents through support and mentor networks.

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*Grant Number:* H158A960004

## State Systems for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities: InterAct Arizona

*Project Director:* Love, Laura
Arizona Department of Education
1535 West Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-543-3251

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The general purpose of InterAct Arizona is to influence local and state-level systems change designed to empower local communities to maximize transition planning and enhance service options for youth with disabilities from age 14 through the age when they exit school.

*Method:* InterAct Arizona will provide statewide training and technical assistance designed to improve and increase the ability of professionals, parents, advocates, and youth to promote the understanding of and the capability to successfully make the transition from student to adult. Needs assessments will determine the availability, quality, and accessibility of services needed to successfully transition into adult roles. Project activities to address identified needs will be designed, implemented, and evaluated. Results of evaluations will be used to guide the design of annual activities.

*Products:* Under the guidance of the InterAct Arizona Council and the network of Arizona Community Transition Teams and Youth Transition Program sites teams, InterAct Arizona will affect state-level and statewide policies, procedures, regulations, and funding mechanisms to improve and expand the availability, access, and quality of transition services for youth with disabilities and their families. Through the expansion of teams and sites, InterAct Arizona will build the capacity of communities statewide to provide more effective delivery of transition services by improving the working relationships among stakeholders in transition services, by developing incentives for accessing and using transition services and resources, and by addressing the unique needs of youth with disabilities from minority backgrounds. The project will produce training and technical assistance materials, resource guides, and other products to facilitate the exchange of information, and will disseminate to local, state, regional, and national audiences.

---

*Grant Number:* H158A960005

## Illinois Transition Consortium — Ensure Implementation of Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Johnson, Gayle
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, IL 62777
217-782-6601

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The Illinois Transition Consortium is a five-year systems change project that proposes to improve the personal outcomes for Illinois youth with disabilities who graduate from public schools.

*Method:* The project expects to create expanded partnerships with students, parents, adults with disabilities, minority representatives, advocates, business leaders, state agencies, and others. To guide the project, it will form an advisory group across all stakeholders; it will conduct focus groups with students and implement systems change based on current student outcomes. It will initiate early and ongoing parent/family technical assistance and training and target resources at the local level to demonstrate systems change for improved outcomes. It will establish a training academy for local stakeholders who have not traditionally been involved and establish a clearinghouses of information for all those involved in or concerned with outcomes of youth with disabilities.

*Products:* The consortium intends to enhance Illinois' capacity to represent the geographical and cultural needs of targeted youth and increase the participation of parents/families and adults with disabilities in preparing for their future; it intends to increase the state's capacity to plan and develop policy and practices that are inclusive of all youth and responsive to their needs and to develop opportunities for local communities to demonstrate student-centered and outcome-based educational and adult services. It will provide information, training, resources and technical assistance to local stakeholders.

---

*Grant Number:* H158A960006

## Oklahoma Systems Change for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Corpolongo, John; Dean, Charlotte W
Oklahoma State Department of Education
2500 N Lincoln Blvd, Rm 411
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-521-4864

*Beginning Date:* 7/01/96
*Ending Date:* 6/30/01

*Purpose:* This project is designed to effectively utilize state and local resources to assist local communities, families, individuals with disabilities, schools, and other agencies to develop and improve the delivery of transition services.

*Method:* The Oklahoma Gaining Adult Independence through Needed Support (GAINS) Project will fund innovative models through local implementation sites. Results will be disseminated and

will provide a foundation for the state to revise or create policy to enhance transition services for youth with disabilities.

*Products:* The Oklahoma GAINS Project is committed to creating collaborative structures to enable individuals and agencies providing transition services to coordinate their efforts to achieve meaningful results for youth with disabilities. It will support regional advisory boards and local transition councils in implementing projects to improve the availability and accessibility of transition services. It will build local, regional, and state capacities to deliver quality technical assistance, training, and transition process guides. It will develop a system to create or revise policies to effectively implement transition services and coordinate procedures to ensure the implementation. It will inform individuals who provide transition services about issues and practices related to successful transition of students with disabilities.

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*Grant Number:* H158A960007

**Louisiana Statewide Transition Project**

*Project Director:* Everson, Jane
Louisiana State University - New Orleans
Medical Center
433 Bolivar Street, 8th Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112
504-942-8245

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The Louisiana Statewide Transition Project is an interagency and multi-level project dedicated to statewide systems change in the area of transition services.

*Method:* The project will guide the development of an integrated statewide system for transition service delivery. It will support the development of individual, local, regional, and state transition activities and assure continuation and improvement of the transition delivery system.

*Products:* The goal of the project is to create a multi-level framework of resources and activities for lasting transition services through collaborative activities involving youths with disabilities and their families.

---

*Grant Number:* H158A960009

**Increasing Transition Services to Students with Disabilities**

*Project Director:* Pennington, Kenneth
Mississippi Department of Education
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205
601-359-3498

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* This project, administered by the Mississippi Department of Education, intends to increase transition services to youth with disabilities.

*Method:* Three transition specialist positions will be created for each of the three regions of Mississippi. The specialists will be assisted by vocational staff, local vocational rehabilitation counselors, special population coordinators, and other technical staff to ensure that each district receives regular hands-on training. Each year of the grant, a statewide transition conference will be held for all personnel. A statewide transition committee will be created with emphasis on collaboration and policy reform and will assess the effectiveness of policies and integration of new policies and federal and state legislation.

*Products:* The project hopes to effect systemic change in transition services for Mississippi. All school districts will receive individualized training in transition services. Increased knowledge, motivation, and direction will be provided for professionals and students with disabilities. The statewide transition committee will strengthen policies in transition services.

---

*Grant Number:* H158A960010

## Delaware's Transition Services Quality Management (TQM)

*Project Director:* Pledgie, Thomas
Delaware Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 1402 Townsend Bldg
Dover, DE 19903
302-739-4667

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The mission of the Transition Services Quality Management System project is to implement a quality-based coordinated system of supports and services that are consumer responsive, and to enable students with disabilities to transition from school to adult life while becoming valued and contributing members of their communities throughout Delaware.

*Method:* To achieve its outcomes, the project intends to plan and implement a statewide collaborative system, changing the state's delivery system to a consumer-responsive transition system. It plans to model and replicate effective transition components, to implement comprehensive training and technical assistance, to develop the capacity for change at higher education levels, and to disseminate information on promising practices which support systems change efforts.

*Products:* The project goals are to increase the availability and access to quality-based transition services, to improve the ability of professionals, families, and advocates in the transition planning process to be responsive and supportive of students interests and preferences, and to enhance and build collaborative relationships between all critical stakeholders that will lead to continuation of quality based transition services after funding ceases.

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*Grant Number:* H158A960011

## District of Columbia Transition Initiative (DCTI)

*Project Director:* Wallington, Carol
District of Columbia Public Schools
Walker Jones Elementary
First & L Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-724-3878

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The purpose of the District of Columbia Transition Initiative is to effect broad and specific improvements in the quality and availability of transition services for area youths with disabilities, and to undertake changes to the structure of systems to support these improvements. A major project strategy is reforming systems through the creation of a new learning enterprise developed jointly by community partners.

*Method:* The proposed project would plan, develop, and publicize mechanisms to increase the availability, accessibility, and quality of transition services. It would ensure that students with disabilities, families, and advocacy and support groups receive training and support to assure informed and active participation and it would develop a coordinated system to provide that training. It would ensure that institutions of higher education are responsive to the needs of students with disabilities and that preservice training programs address the competencies for effective transition planning. It would create a system-wide mechanism for information dissemination so that project products are made available to interested parties.

*Products:* The project will enhance the current system of transition in the District of Columbia by implementing statewide policies and program incentives that promote collaboration and coordination across programs, improving statewide data collection and follow-up, and developing administrative policies that encourage long-term and systematic change at all levels. Students will be able to participate in challenging, purposeful programs of study in school and at work. Career development training will be blended with business-driven, hands-on vocational experiences.

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*Grant Number:* H158A960013

## Alabama Transition Initiative to Increase the State's Capacity to Improve and Expand Its Transition Services and Programs to Meet the Needs of Youth with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Whetstone, Mabrey; Rabren, Karen
Alabama Department of Education
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130
334-242-8114

*Beginning Date:* 9/01/96
*Ending Date:* 8/31/01

*Purpose:* The Alabama Transition Initiative's goal is to provide student-centered transition planning and implementation at the local level. The initiative is designed to create a network of local school-based demonstration programs with effective transition services to be replicated statewide.

*Method:* Five goals are being proposed: 1) a local program/service initiative, intended to empower local education agencies and communities to implement effective practices. 2) The interagency initiative will strengthen local and state partnerships among agencies in order to impact positive change. 3) The post-school linkage initiative is intended to create linkages between students and local adult services and opportunities available through state agencies, communities, and business and industry. 4) The training and dissemination initiative will implement a comprehensive training and dissemination program designed to improve and increase the ability of all stakeholders in transition. 5) Finally, the intent of the student tracking initiative is to improve at the local level the transition planning process and related service programs and to serve as an accountability index for the state department regarding the performances of its youth and young adults with disabilities.

*Products:* Through the development and implementation of a comprehensive system of transition services, the Alabama Transition Initiative will positively impact over 67,000 youth with disabilities over the course of the five-year project. Building on existing state capacity, the plan will undertake five initiatives, which, when accomplished, will transfer empowerment to the local level with the direct beneficiaries being the students and their families.

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*Grant Number:* H158A960017

## South Carolina Collaboration for Systemic Transition of Youth with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Ferrante, Richard; Christmus, Dan
University of South Carolina
School of Medicine Center for Development
Columbia, SC 29208
803-935-5248

*Beginning Date:* 8/01/96
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The South Carolina Collaboration for Systemic Transition (SCCST) of Youth with Disabilities Project provides the opportunity for the state to link several efforts at serving youth with disabilities: functional collaborations will be developed; youth with disabilities and their families will be empowered regarding transition issues; a statewide, comprehensive training and transition program will be established; local service delivery will be designed and provided; and the transition system will be continuously monitored and evaluated, quantitatively and qualitatively.

*Method:* A statewide collaboration council will provide training and technical assistance. An extensive outreach program will discover, recover, and retain the targeted youth in transition systems. All higher education institutions involved in the project will implement transition-related courses in teacher education curriculum. Targeted youth and their families and support groups will receive training to empower themselves to become change agents in the transition process.

*Products:* This project will result in development and implementation of a statewide program to realize systemic change, beginning at the local level and working its way up to the statewide level.

*Grant Number:* H158A990001

## Alaska Transition Initiative

*Project Director:* Kooley, Daryl
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
801 W. 10th Street, Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801
907-269-3572

*Beginning Date:* 10/19/99
*Ending Date:* 7/31/01

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Alaska Transition Initiative is to develop a statewide transition system enabling all students with disabilities in Alaska to leave school with the skills, supports, and knowledge required to enhance their participation in adult life.

*Method:* To ensure that all students with disabilities leave school situated in the working, learning, and living arrangements of their choice and to empower students and their families to become active decision makers in planning and implementing transition services, the project will promote and support state-level collaboration to strengthen transition services and increase awareness of the need for coordinated transition services and build support for programs. It will increase the availability, access, and quality of those services statewide and build the capacity of local networks to implement services. It will provide incentives for local planning, implementation, and evaluation of transition services.

*Products:* The goals of the project are designed to address systems issues in Alaska and to build capacity within the state, as well as improve local community transition activities. Alaska's local community transition activities. Alaska's approach to transition for youth builds upon a strong tradition of local control and provides flexibility for local transition networks to develop and implement systems that meet the unique needs and circumstances of their communities, ensuring that local transition services address Alaska's diverse cultures, geography, political and governmental structures, and economy.

# 84.323A
# State Improvement Grants

*Grant Number:* H323A990001

## Alabama State Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Causey, Julia
Alabama Department of Education
PO Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101
334-242-8114

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* This improvement grant for the state of Alabama is a systems change effort aimed at improving the reading skills of students with disabilities, reducing the numbers of students with disabilities who drop out, reducing suspensions and expulsions for students with disabilities, and reducing special education teacher turnover and increasing the numbers of fully credentialed teachers.

*Method:* These goals will be achieved through systems-change strategies that incorporate research-based training strategies. These strategies include: staff development in strategies for reading; an online academy and communications support system for professional development, paraprofessional training, and conferences; a parent training and information center; staff training in the use of assistive technology to implement accommodations for students; training for early childhood care providers, general and special education preschool teachers, and parents in developmentally appropriate practices and functional readiness curriculum that targets reading; training for effective behavior intervention and positive behavior management; and institution of aggressive recruitment strategies to increase certified personnel.

*Products:* Through the use of these training strategies, Alabama will provide systems change and impact the areas of need. Data will be gathered and evaluated to measure progress toward project goals, objectives, and services, and to inform project staff of any necessary refinements throughout the five years of the project. Statewide systems change will be implemented through the various partnerships established by the project. Project goals anticipate increased performance in reading scores for students with disabilities and a major decrease in dropout, suspension, and expulsion rates for those students.

*Grant Number:* H323A990003

## System Building for Special Education Personnel Development and Support

*Project Director:* Schendel, Julie
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146
515-271-3936

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The purpose of this state improvement grant is to address four issues regarding special education in Iowa: 1) over 70% of special education students in Iowa have significant reading problems; 2) over one of every eight students with special needs in Iowa (12.9%) is being taught by teachers not fully certified in the areas in which they are teaching, fewer than 100 (1.6%) are exposed to special education teachers who are persons of color, and virtually none are being taught by persons with disabilities; 3) the effectiveness of transitions that occur as students with special education needs move from one educational setting to another and from an educational setting into the community needs to be improved; and 4) proficient, appropriately comprised teams for the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are needed, along with the assurance that all IEPs reflect high academic standards.

*Method:* The State Improvement Grant (SIG) Literacy Initiative will address the needs of students with special education needs whose reading, writing, and communication skills are substandard. The SIG Individualized Education Program Initiative will ensure that all students with special education needs have Individualized Education Programs that reflect high academic standards and that are developed and implemented by professionals and parents proficient in their use. The SIG Endorsement Initiative will increase the percentage of students with special education needs being instructed by certified special education teachers with appropriate endorsements. The SIG Career Ladder Initiative will increase the percentage of students with special education needs whose teachers are persons of color and/or persons with disabilities. SIG project activities address these issues by emphasizing better prepared instructional staff, high-quality IEPs that are academically challenging, and improved student performance.

*Products:* Training modules will be developed on early literacy development, action research, and research-based reading instruction practices. An information and availability announcement will be developed and disseminated offering college and university faculty IEP materials. Fact sheets will be developed and disseminated describing high quality IEPs that meet federal requirements. Awareness level training sessions will be offered to college and university faculty on topics such as discipline, general education curriculum, general education teacher participation, student progress monitoring, district-wide assessment, and parent involvement. Protocols will be established with 15 area education agencies to provide professional development for general education teachers in order for them to meet federal mandates for involvement and effective participation in IEP development and implementation.

*Grant Number:* H323A990007

## Partnerships for Achieving Student Success (PASS)

*Project Director:* Cox, H. Douglas
Virginia Department of Education
PO Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120
804-225-2701

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* This statewide improvement project in Virginia will work to facilitate, in cooperation with school divisions: 1) the increase of the school completion rate of students with disabilities in the context of higher academic expectations; 2) an improvement in the performance of children and youth with disabilities by enhancing the knowledge, skills, abilities, and performance of all personnel who work with children and youth with disabilities; and 3) an improvement in meaningful parent/student involvement with special services personnel.

*Method:* This project will establish a system-wide practice of results-based program improvement for all children and youth with disabilities at state, local, and classroom levels. It will develop a partnership infrastructure that focuses statewide efforts on progressing toward Virginia's strategic goals. Personnel working with children and youth with disabilities will be trained to attend to improved academic literacy for students with disabilities, with particular attention to Virginia's Standards of Learning. A statewide system of technical assistance, professional support, and development will be coordinated to enhance all service providers' and families' abilities to collaborate and support the focus on academic performance. Efforts will be made to increase the supply and diversity of qualified personnel to serve children and youth with disabilities.

*Products:* The project will increase the statewide percentage of students with disabilities successfully completing school. It will promote and increase the supply of qualified special educators and related services personnel and the statewide availability of personnel preparation opportunities in all endorsement areas and opportunities which focus on best practices. It will increase active parent and student participation in special education process decisions.

*Grant Number:* H323A990008

## New Hampshire's State Improvement Grant in Special Education: Promoting Equity and Excellence for All Children and Youth with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Traniello, Dina
New Hampshire Department of Education
Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-271-1536

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* This statewide improvement project in New Hampshire addresses the following system components: leadership and service coordination, standards for practice, preservice education, professional development, use of data for short- and long-range planning, dissemination of exemplary practices, involvement of individuals with disabilities and parents of children and youth with disabilities, and reduction or elimination of systemic barriers to effective service delivery.

*Method:* This statewide improvement grant will expand and strengthen partnerships among agencies and organizations involved in and concerned with reforming and improving systems for providing education, early intervention, and transition services for children and youth with disabilities. It will establish a foundation of exemplary professional practice to inform and enrich the efforts of agencies, institutions of higher education, individuals with disabilities and their families, and other partners and stakeholders to improve educational results for children and youth with disabilities. It will improve the capacity of personnel preparation programs to support students to meet and maintain high standards for performance and it will improve the competencies of general and special educators, paraprofessionals, and families related to the provision of high quality educational services to these students. It will improve the systems that collect, analyze, and utilize data related to student performance and outcomes. It will improve service quality, coordination, and integration through policy reform, systems change, and provision of technical assistance related to transition policies and practice, student access to and participation in the general education curriculum, and school-based disciplinary policies concerning students with emotional disturbance.

*Products:* The project will establish for the first time in New Hampshire a system for coordinating planning, policy, and implementation of professional development and systems change efforts in general and special education; it will assure greater attention to accountability for positive learning outcomes by all local and state education efforts; it will embed consideration of children and youth with disabilities within existing professional development and education improvement efforts; and it will establish new initiatives that focus specifically on improving results for children and youth with disabilities.

*Grant Number:* H323A990009

## Kansas State Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Ottlinger, Kerry A.
Kansas State Department of Education
120 SE 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1182
785-296-4952

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Kansas State Improvement Grant is to assure that Kansas' educational systems are aligned to support all students, including those with disabilities, to achieve high state standards and positive adult outcomes.

*Method:* This project has the potential to impact more than 214,000 Kansans, including more than 40,000 educators and 56,000 children with disabilities and their families, statewide. The plan of operation features six major goals and intended outcomes to meet the identified needs. Goal 1 will increase inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in Kansas' system of standards-based reform. Goal 2, school-family-community partnerships, will increase active support of families in school partnerships and training and increase schools' responsiveness in family-community partnerships. Goal 3 will increase early student success, reduce frequency of referrals to special education services, and show improved conditions for young children and families. Goal 4, positive post-school outcomes, will increase gainful employment and lifelong learning. Goal 5, personnel supply/demand, will work toward an adequate supply of diverse, well-qualified, and effective education and related services personnel. Goal 6, quality issues for personnel development, involves use of administrative, curricular, and instructional practices that convey high expectations and assist students with disabilities to meet challenging standards, as well as develop and implement individual education plans (IEPs) that reflect those standards.

*Products:* This model for statewide systems change will stimulate partnership development within and between institutions of higher education (IHEs) and local education agencies (LEAs) as a basis for mentoring and induction systems for new teachers, for the renewal and improvement of teacher preparation, and for collaborative approaches to solving the problems of daily practice in serving children and youth.

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*Grant Number:* H323A990011

## Ohio's State Improvement Grant: A Statewide Model for Rethinking Schooling in Fundamental Ways

*Project Director:* Herner, John
Ohio Department of Education
933 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
614-466-2650

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The goals of this project include: 1) to provide children and youth with disabilities access to challenging academic curricula; 2) to develop partnerships among members of the learning community to improve results for all children; 3) to increase cooperation and collaboration in

and among agencies, and the coordination of services across agencies; 4) to promote collaboration between regular and special education personnel to ensure successful transitions; 5) to develop a model to document accountability and continuous improvement in service delivery; 6) to improve building-level processes for assisting students with learning problems; 7) to increase the participation of parents, families, and community members in decision-making; 8) to support the development of shared responsibility and ownership at the building level; 9) to make personnel preparation programs accessible throughout the state; and 10) to prepare graduates and school personnel to effectively manage the behavior of all students.

*Method:* This project will employ two basic strategies in Ohio: 1) partnership sites to demonstrate how districts can get the conditions right for all children to learn at high levels; and 2) partnership agreements with institutions of higher education (IHEs) to increase the quantity and competency of personnel required to meet student needs. This state improvement grant (SIG) will serve as the vehicle for promoting shared responsibility among partners at the state, regional, and local levels. Collaborative partnerships will assist school districts in developing the capacity to make and sustain meaningful change. The partnership agreements are structured to ensure that core "providers," e.g., regional professional development centers, special education regional resource centers (SERRCs), IHEs, parent training and information centers, educational service centers, become core "partners." Resulting models for how to use partnership resources/services in a coordinated way will help local education agencies help all youngsters to learn to succeed in school. During the first year of the project, the partnership agreements will be implemented in six regional sites. Ten additional regional partnership sites — five in year two and five in year three — will be added over the course of the project, for a minimum of 16 sites (i.e., one in each of Ohio's SERRC regions). At the same time, other funds will be used to create incentives for replicating the development of partnership sites across the state. To make personnel preparation programs accessible around the state, and to address the severe shortage of qualified personnel, including those from underrepresented groups, a series of additional partnership agreements will be implemented to prepare orientation and mobility specialists, teachers of students with visual impairments, deaf interpreters, speech-language pathologists, and behavioral interventionists.

*Products:* During project years one and two, a publication detailing partnership site activities will be developed for use in replicating the effective aspects of each site. During years three and four, a "promising practices" document will be produced that provides strategies for integrating professional development needs assessment processes for children with disabilities into district-wide continuous improvement planning for all youngsters. A third document, produced in year five, will summarize recommendations from a state education agency action seminar, designed as a mechanism for disseminating project findings on a national basis.

*Grant Number:* H323A990012

## Georgia - State Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Bryar, Marlene
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404-657-9958

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* This statewide improvement grant for the state of Georgia is intended to improve the systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transitional services and consequently improve the performance of students with disabilities, through responses to professional needs and partnerships that meet student needs. Responses to professional needs include professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices. Partnerships will include state education personnel, parents of students with and without disabilities, organizations representing individuals with disabilities and their families, institutions of higher education, and community-based organizations.

*Method:* Activities will be conducted to increase and maintain the number of qualified personnel to provide services to students with disabilities in the following areas: general and special education teachers of students with disabilities; interpreters and teachers of students with hearing and visual impairments, who are blind or deaf, or who have orthopedic impairments; teachers of students with emotional/behavioral disorders; and speech language pathologists for students with speech/language disorders. Parent-educator partnerships will be strengthened; training will be given to provide better services to young children with disabilities and their families; general and special educators will be trained to better address rules, regulations, and procedures; and access will be provided to the general education curriculum and statewide assessment for students with disabilities. General and special educators will learn behavior management techniques for safe and orderly environments and special educators will learn to implement effective transition activities for students with disabilities.

*Products:* The implementation of project activities should result in the following statewide improvements for students with disabilities: an increase in the number of students who receive education with nondisabled peers for more than one-half of the school day; an increase in the number of students who exit special education and return to general education programs and who earn a degree in regular education; an increase in the number of those who participate in the statewide assessment program with and without accommodations; a decrease in those who drop out of school; an increase in the number of students who attend postsecondary education programs and who are employed upon exiting from school.

*Grant Number:* H323A990013

## Kentucky State Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Armstrong, Michael
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Division of Exceptional Children Services
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502-564-4970

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The purpose of Kentucky's state improvement program is to improve learning results for Kentucky's children and youth with disabilities at all levels so that those results are fully measurable and comparable in quality to those for all children. The state will implement these goals through a unified and coherent plan in partnership with regular and special educators, local and state administrators, related service and paraprofessional personnel, institutes of higher education and postsecondary programs, and students with disabilities and their families.

*Method:* To improve the academic and behavioral skills of students with disabilities, the state will increase the partnerships between parents and students and state and local systems that contribute to success in these areas. It will offer collaborative and integrated teacher preparation programs, develop state and local support systems and networks, and promote a systemic integration and coordination of local education resources, all designed to promote student academic and behavioral success. To increase the effectiveness of early intervention services and to ensure the successful transition of students with special needs into preschool programs, the state will work to increase parents' knowledge about and participation in the education of their children. It will work to increase the number of qualified special education personnel in early intervention and train them in the development of natural supportive environments as well as in the use of assistive technology to improve student access to educational opportunities. It will also increase the number of accredited inclusive intervention programs in the community that facilitate transition to preschool. To increase the number of students with disabilities who complete school and transition to an adult life style of their choice, the state will form and sustain partnerships with students, parents, education and other human service agencies, employers, institutes of higher education, and communities.

*Products:* The professional development programs and collaborations implemented through the project will increase the number of qualified general and special educators, related services personnel, and paraprofessionals who serve students with disabilities. The comprehensive and innovative technology systems instituted by the project will enhance learning results for students with disabilities. With such changes, the project will help bring a major increase in the overall performance of students with disabilities in statewide assessments. The effectiveness of early intervention and preschool transition programs will be increased. The project will increase the number of students with disabilities who complete school and attain their choice of employment or continuing education.

*Grant Number:* H323A990015

## Investing in Our Students: Michigan's Model to Improve the Performance of Students with Disabilities

*Project Director:* Thompson, Jacquelyn
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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* Michigan's Model to Improve the Performance of Students with Disabilities is an integrated design to bring both high quality and efficiency to comprehensive personnel development for improving the performance of children and youth with disabilities and an understanding of their disability. This State Improvement Grant (SIG) will provide the resources necessary to implement the model and assure improved skills and competencies for practitioners and parents, and ultimately improved performance for children and youth.

*Method:* The functional model employed by this project will integrate diverse and existing state-level activities into a cohesive, coordinated, and efficient effort. The SIG provides a framework for analyzing, synthesizing, coordinating, and disseminating important information and skills for educators, parents of children and youth with disabilities, and the students themselves in Michigan. The project will focus on improving the capacity of those who work with children and youth. The model supports continuous progress in developing a strong delivery system in which practitioners are skilled and students achieve at higher levels. Three priorities of this project are the following: 1) improving transition practices; 2) implementing positive behavioral interventions and supports; and 3) addressing personnel shortages, including under-representation of personnel reflecting the diversity of the student population.

*Products:* The project will foster networks of partnerships to assist in reforming Michigan's many and diverse personnel development efforts into a comprehensive system for providing training in early intervention, educational, and transitional services to children and youth with disabilities. A set of four "hubs" for coordinating training and information flow will be established to: 1) develop information based on student progress indicators; 2) disseminate information to all participants in the education community; 3) support sustained learning leading to changes in the practice related to improving student performance; and 4) support districts in developing local capacity to assure quality services to all students.

*Grant Number:* H323A990016

## State Program Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Hession, Lucy
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Division of Special Education
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410-767-0242

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The plans for the Maryland State Improvement Grant are based on a vision of a unified system that centers around a core set of student outcomes and standards that define goals for the system, and there is a means for assessing student progress toward those outcomes. Curriculum and instruction are aligned with the standards and outcomes, and the entire core is supported by policies and programs that guide professional development and preparation, technical assistance for school improvement, and the allocation of resources. The unified system accommodates and supports diverse learners without unnecessary categorization of students or program resources. The system values flexibility and collaboration at all levels in order to promote student attainment of goals. To make this vision a reality, the mission of this SIG is to improve education and outcomes of students with disabilities through services and strategies that involve stakeholders and system components in sustained efforts to bring about progressive and positive change in services for students aged three to 21; in professional development across the spectrum of professionals, paraprofessionals, and parents; and in preservice preparation of general educators, special educators, and related personnel.

*Method:* This mission will be accomplished through informed leadership and involvement of people at all levels of the education community in a process that unifies the system by integrating the education of students with disabilities into statewide standards-based reform and accountability. Project services and activities will: 1) fully integrate education of students with disabilities into statewide standards-based reform and accountability; 2) expand opportunities of students with disabilities to participate in the general education curriculum and statewide performance assessments; 3) design and deliver professional development that responds to standards-based needs for building personnel competencies to improve education and outcomes of students with disabilities; 4) strengthen the capacities of preservice preparation programs to increase their productivity and their capacities to align preparation with standard-based reform and professional development; 5) improve the capacities of the statewide early intervention system to provide high-quality services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, and to promote readiness to learn; and 6) assist school districts, higher education, professional development, and other stakeholders in using research and best practice for school improvement, program improvement, and management of change.

*Products:* The work of the State Improvement Grant will be of significant assistance to local education agencies striving toward educational improvement and inclusion within Maryland's nationally recognized accountability system.

*Grant Number:* H323A990018

## Ka Hihi'o O Na Liko O Hawai'i Mua
## (The Vision of the Budding Children of Future Hawaii)

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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The Hawaii State Department of Education state improvement plan will improve systems that provide early intervention, educational, and transitional services through an innovative personnel development program supported by coordinated policy, procedure, and practice interventions. This strategy is expected to lead to significant gains in in-school and post-school outcomes for children with disabilities.

*Method:* The project integrates personnel development and system improvement outcomes in order to build local capacity to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Interdisciplinary professional development teams will provide training to school-based teams that will implement new practices and provide feedback to policy level work groups, which recommend system-wide changes. As part of these teams, educators, related service providers, and parents are supported at the school level, which allows an easier development of improved procedures and potential policy improvements at the state level. This multilevel approach, linked with continuous feedback of information, will ensure lasting and sustained system improvements for children with disabilities and their families.

*Products:* The project's emphasis on state-level policy making, district-level training and support, and school-level practice will directly and positively affect outcomes for children with disabilities. As participants are trained and supported at each system level, capacity is developed to improve areas of critical need and sustain these improvements over time.

*Grant Number:* H323A990019

## Utah State Improvement Grant

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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* Through this state improvement project, the Utah State Education Agency will address the need for inservice and preservice preparation to ensure that all personnel who work with children with disabilities have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet their needs.

*Method:* The project will provide general and special educators with the content knowledge and collaborative skills to meet the needs of children with disabilities. It will prepare professionals and paraprofessionals in the area of early intervention and work with institutions of higher education and other entities to prepare personnel to ensure that those institutions and entities develop the capacity to continue to support professional development programs that meet state and local needs. The state education agency will develop cooperative agreements with other states for joint support and development of programs to prepare personnel for which there is not sufficient demand within a single state to justify such programs. It will work with neighboring states to address the lack of uniformity and reciprocity in the credentialing of teachers and other personnel. The project will enhance the ability of teachers and others to use successful strategies and best practices to address the conduct of students with disabilities that impedes learning in the classrooms.

*Products:* The project will acquire significant knowledge derived from educational research and other sources, and will develop information about how the state, if appropriate, will adopt these promising practices, materials, and technology. This knowledge will be disseminated to teachers, administrators, school board members, and related services personnel. Project efforts will build local and state capacity to provide, improve, and expand services for students with disabilities and ensure a continuing supply of qualified personnel at all levels.

*Grant Number:* H323A990022

## Improving Results Initiative

*Project Director:* Weaver, Nolene
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208-332-6917

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The Improving Results Initiative for Idaho is based on a collaborative partnership designed to align and strengthen educational systems that contribute to high achievement for children and youth with disabilities. Partners in this project include the Idaho State Department of Education, local education agencies, Idaho Parents Unlimited, institutions of higher education, and others.

*Method:* Specific activities that will help children and youth with disabilities to meet or exceed newly established content and performance standards include the following: implementation of state and local policies and procedures that strengthen the capacity of schools to improve educational results for all students, including those with disabilities; enhancement of the capacity for parents to influence reforms and increase their children's educational achievements; revision of professional and paraprofessional standards, certification requirements, and personnel development programs for the purpose of redefining personnel skills necessary to improve results for children and youth with disabilities; creation of a system of preservice and inservice training to ensure that parents and professionals are prepared to meet students' needs; effective administration, systematic evaluation, and continuous improvement of the project through a partnership with local and state education agencies and institutions of higher education.

*Products:* Institutions of higher education will receive subgrants to align training programs with revised standards, which will ensure that school personnel will have the skills and knowledge to sustain school improvements. A training clearinghouse will increase access to professional development by coordinating the preservice and inservice training efforts of all partners across the state. The project will also provide tuition waivers, assistanceships, and other incentives to recruit and train a sufficient number of individual, particularly those from underrepresented groups. Strategies to retain special educators and related services providers in employment will be implemented. These initiatives will present unique opportunities to reform and strengthen Idaho's education system in order to maintain a superior level of academic achievement by both regular and special education students.

*Grant Number:* H323A990026

## Improving the Special Education System in California

*Project Director:* Parker, Alice D.
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Special Education Division
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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* This project will develop collaborative partnerships to improve services for children and youth with disabilities. The state improvement plan will serve as a guide to help system stakeholders concentrate improvement efforts and focus on future achievements and as a blueprint for those responsible for making system improvements by delineating and prioritizing training, technical assistance, and other systemic needs.

*Method:* The project will help set high academic standards and clear performance goals for students with disabilities, along with appropriate and effective strategies and methods to ensure that students have maximum opportunities to achieve those standards and goals. Teachers will participate in comprehensive professional development programs to ensure that they will possess the skills and knowledge necessary to address the educational and related needs of those children. Finally, the project will work for service integration and the coordination of state and local education and other agencies to address the full range of student needs.

*Products:* Through its efforts, the project intends to increase the percentage of students with disabilities who are performing equal to or better than the average of students without disabilities, to increase the positive results achieved by students with disabilities on school and post-school outcomes as determined by state standards, to reduce the rate of suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities compared to the rate of general education students, and to increase the percentage of special education students earning a high school diploma or GED so that the percentage is equal to or higher than that for nondisabled students. The project will increase the rate of special education teachers who are fully credentialed and the percentage of special and general education teachers responding to inservice training, resources, or technical assistance.

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*Grant Number:* H323A990027

## Massachusetts State Improvement Grant: Project FOCUS

*Project Director:* Mittnacht, Marcia M.
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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* Project FOCUS offers the following outcomes to guide statewide efforts toward systems improvement for the benefit of all students: 1) knowledgeable parents and service providers working together to provide high quality early intervention and preschool services within natural environments for infants and toddlers; 2) knowledgeable parents and educators working together to

ensure that all students (K-12) have access to the general curriculum are supported across all educational settings, and are able to demonstrate their acquired knowledge as full participants in every aspect of education reform, including a variety of options for improved postsecondary outcomes; 3) restructured teacher preparation and professional development programs to incorporate promising practices of teaching and learning for students with diverse abilities and needs, based on education reform standards, including strengthening ties among preservice programs, school districts, and local communities; and 4) enhanced accountability procedures at the state and local level for students, parents, and educators.

*Method:* Project FOCUS is designed to provide preservice and professional development activities for educators, parents, students, and other interested stakeholders. The major themes of parent collaboration, research to practice, interagency coordination, innovation, capacity building, and linkages to existing activities to maximize community, state, and federal resources are reflected across activities in six focus areas. The first focus area prepares providers and parents to understand and implement a shift in the provision of services and supports to natural environments during early intervention and preschool years. The second focus area, kindergarten and elementary ages, prepares teachers and parents with skills related to ensuring access to the general curriculum in general education settings for all students, with an emphasis on literacy skills (including Braille literacy), universal instructional design to accommodate diverse learning styles, and issues related to the educational climate. The third focus area will maintain the same content as the second focus area adjusted to respond to the needs of older students and generally different administrative and organizational features of middle schools and high schools. The fourth focus area will address enabling students with disabilities, ages 18-22, to participate in adult options, including postsecondary education and employment, with their nondisabled peers. The fifth focus area will assist teacher preparation programs statewide to restructure and unify curricula based on education reform standards and teaching methodologies to prepare general and special educators and paraprofessionals to work with all students within the context of a professional development school model. The sixth focus area will develop and enhance existing accountability systems across the full range of services for infants, toddlers, and students with disabilities.

*Products:* A network of mentors will be created from various school districts across the state. Among other roles, mentors will assist with training and technical assistance activities. Three series of regional training sessions will be developed: one set for teams of early intervention and preschool educators, parents and service providers; a second set for educators, parents, and elementary-aged students; and a third set for middle school, high school, and transition-aged students, parents, educators, and employment-related service providers.

*Grant Number:* H323A990028

## Missouri Preparation of Personnel Partnership

*Project Director:* Friedebach, Melodie
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Division of Special Education
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573-751-2965

*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The goal of the Missouri Preparation of Personnel Project is to improve the educational outcomes for students with disabilities and ensure a comprehensive statewide system of personnel preparation and development that reflects collaboration of consumers, professional organizations, local school districts, and higher education through the following: 1) to increase the supply of qualified special education personnel and related services personnel who are available to carry out the purposes of IDEA to provide special education services to children aged 3 to 21 years so that the shortage is reduced to 1% vacancy and 3% temporary certificates; 2) to provide professional development and systems enhancement to increase the percentages of students with disabilities that score at the near proficiency, proficient, and advanced achievement levels for the Missouri Assessment Program content areas of Mathematics and Communication Arts (Reading) by 25%; 3) to increase by 25% the number of students with disabilities who graduate with diplomas and decrease by 25% the number of students with disabilities who exit the school without a diploma; and 4) to achieve systemic change throughout Missouri in increasing placements in regular education in targeted local districts by 20% through individualized training and technical assistance and changes in institutions of higher education.

*Method:* The project will: 1) establish a strong administrative structure; 2) designate an Advisory Board; and 3) establish a management information system that will allow for precise measurement of outcomes for students with disabilities and compile relevant statistics on educational personnel. The grant will build the capacity of local schools to provide services to the target population through fewer vacancies in critical special education and related services positions by providing implementation grants and extensive training opportunities.

*Products:* The project will produce: 1) a mentoring manual focused on ways to support new teachers in special education; 2) reading curricula and training for teachers developed by the Eisenhower-funded reading initiative; 3) fact sheets on findings of the evaluation of this project; 4) a multi-media inquiry-based curriculum for preservice and inservice professional development that supports inclusion and the Show Me Standards; and 5) effective tutorial interventions to raise achievement of lower functioning students.

*Grant Number:* H323A990029

## Vermont State Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Kane, Dennis
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Family and Educational Support Team
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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Vermont state improvement plan is to improve educational results for children with disabilities through professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices.

*Method:* Based on critical needs for professional development, the State Department of Education and its partners have identified four statewide initiatives for inclusion in the state improvement plan: 1) accommodating children with disabilities in statewide assessments; 2) preparing Master's level speech and language therapists committed to working in Vermont schools; 3) recruiting and supporting the preparation of sign language interpreters and occupational and physical therapists committed to working in Vermont; and 4) implementing model early literacy programs for all students, with special emphasis on students failing or at risk of failure, including those with disabilities. The framework for the improvement plan includes standards for vital results and fields of knowledge, recommendations for providing instruction, and assessment of student learning across the grades.

*Products:* Each of the four components of the project will result in system-wide improvements. The training and technical assistance provided by the statewide assessment component will enable special educators and IEP teams to use effective participation strategies and options that will result in the full participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments. The establishment of a program at the University of Vermont for personnel preparation will assure a steady supply of appropriately trained professionals that will meet a continuing need. New opportunities for supporting the preparation of interpreters for the deaf and hearing impaired will improve the educational opportunities for these students. The early literacy component of the project, focused on prevention, early identification, and intensive instruction for children at risk of school failure, will help to dramatically increase student performance. Working closely with its partners, the state will implement a comprehensive plan for dissemination of best practices. Each element of the plan will be evaluated and the results disseminated through all of the partners and will result in improved performance of students statewide.

*Grant Number:* H323A990033

## Professional Development Partnerships for Improving Student Outcomes

*Project Director:* Bost, Loujeania W.
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*Beginning Date:* 2/01/99
*Ending Date:* 1/31/04

*Purpose:* The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Department of Education will develop a unified, integrated, and coordinated network entitled the Professional Development Partnership for Improving Student Outcomes. This Professional Development Partnership will be responsible for professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge of best practices. All activities will focus on improving results for children with disabilities while promoting systemic change. Key goals of the state improvement plan include: 1) establishing high standards for students and teachers consistent with the Governor's Education Initiatives; 2) aligning the goals of the plan with goals and activities of appropriate state plans to promote coordination, collaboration, and systemic change; 3) establishing clear accountability methods that accurately measure the outcomes/performance of students while holding local education agencies accountable; 4) improving the quality and quantity of professionals, especially in areas of identified need/shortages, and 5) improving the recruitment, preparation, and retention of underrepresented groups of professionals.

*Method:* The state improvement plan (SIP) will build partnerships that focus on coordination and collaboration with existing agencies, programs, projects, and resources. Integration of the goals of the Professional Development Partnership within existing policies and state-level initiatives will be a primary focus to ensure systemic change. A two-tiered approach will be used: 1) state-level policy review and revision, and 2) local-level pilot implementation and evaluation. This two-tiered approach ensures that policy will be anchored in practice. Key strategies to insuring that goals of the SIP are met include: 1) providing coordinated technical assistance to local education agencies; 2) restructuring preservice training programs so that graduates are prepared to meet the complexities of today's students and the school environment; 3) changing state policies and procedures to address barriers to systemic change; and 4) disseminating best practice information to assist parents and professionals in translating policies and procedures into effective practices in schools resulting in improved student performance.

*Products:* This project through its coordinated partnerships and systemic reform will improve the results of students with disabilities. Aligning state and local policies and effective practices through the Pennsylvania Development Partnerships will enable all students to achieve their full potential and become productive citizens. Annual reports will be developed and disseminated to partners as well as a training summary of statistics and report. Project staff will provide preservice and inservice training, disseminate training packets via the World Wide Web, and disseminate personnel clearinghouse information via the World Wide Web.

*Grant Number:* H323A000001

## Nebraska Special Education State Program Improvement Grant

*Project Director:* Losh, Mary Ann; Schliesse, Barbara
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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* This project will support a research-based behavior improvement academy. The project will also address systemic changes in state policies to: 1) support staff development programs to improve behavior and instructional strategies, 2) improve transition services and service integration, and 3) increase personnel supply.

*Method:* The statewide program will initiate systemic reforms and build local capacity to provide, improve, and expand services to students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. It will support the need to build the capacity of local education agencies to change systems to improve behavior and instructional strategies. It will ensure an adequate supply of personnel to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities and their families. The project will establish a Leadership Development Academy to implement research-based behavior improvement and to teach instructional strategies.

*Products:* This project will improve the skills of personnel in the area of research-based positive behavior management and instruction. Systems will be aligned and policy changed at the state and local levels to support students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. Statewide educational policies and resources will be leveraged to help support future local capacity building for behavior management and instruction. The project hopes to positively affect achievement scores, graduation rates, and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000003

## Connecticut State Improvement Grant—Special Education

*Project Director:* Dowaliby, George P.; Kirner, Marianne
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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* This project will address identified state needs included in the Connecticut State Improvement Plan. Needs will be addressed through the formation of a statewide partnership team for leadership and through requests for proposals and incentives that support partnership

teams of schools, institutions of higher education, state agencies, community organizations, and parents to: 1) improve systems' abilities to meet the needs of diverse learners; and 2) reduce personnel shortages in low-incidence disability populations with an increase in representation of minority personnel.

*Method:* The first goal will be accomplished by: 1) developing and replicating programs to address: transitions from Part B to Part C and to postsecondary situations, literacy in young children (ages zero to eight) and their parents, parental involvement, behavioral needs of children, and instructional methods to meet learners' needs; and 2) providing incentives to promote systems change in institutions of higher education to train educational professionals to meet the diverse needs of all children (0-21), including those with visual impairments. The second goal will be accomplished by: 1) developing a statewide coordinated data collection system to project future pools of qualified candidates; and 2) providing incentives to recruit students to enroll in training programs for bilingual speech pathologists, teachers of visually impaired, and other low-incidence populations.

*Products:* Existing partnerships will be strengthened and new partnerships will be formed, children's performance in literacy and behavior will be improved, and personnel shortages will be reduced with an increase in minority representation.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000011

## Montana's State Improvement Plan

*Project Director:* Runkel, Robert; Anderson, Susan Bailey
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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* Montana's State Improvement Grant will help expedite the state's progress in creating an educational system in which all students receive the supports and services they require to be successful. Building upon a previously initiated general education reform effort, this project will encompass initiatives that serve three purposes: 1) to align concurrent activities within general and special education to create a unified and coherent agenda of school improvement in Montana; 2) to target specific areas of need unique to the delivery of services to students with disabilities, creating new partnerships, approaches, and solutions to improve outcomes in areas known to be in need of improvement; and 3) to target statewide challenges in the area of personnel preparation, recruitment, retention, and professional development.

*Method:* Project goals will focus on three areas: standards-based reform; improved outcomes for students with disabilities; and personnel retention, recruitment, and professional development. Work in each of these areas will be coordinated by a team comprised of individuals whose collective knowledge, skills, and areas of responsibility create a context in which identified activities

have the participation and resources necessary for completion. For example, coordinated responses to training needs can be developed when teams involve individuals representative of the preservice, inservice, and school implementation levels. All project initiatives are designed with this systems approach to maximize the impact of project initiatives.

*Products:* This project will assist in Montana's progress toward creating an educational system in which all students receive the supports and services they require to be successful. Formal school improvement partnership agreements with the Office of Public Instruction will ensure that project efforts are integrated with other State plans and will be aligned in a way that maximizes available resources. Agreements with the state's parent training center, institutions of higher education, and other organizations within the state will help ensure the sought-for outcomes for young children and students with disabilities in Montana.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000012

## Improving North Carolina's System of Education for Exceptional Children

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* The North Carolina State Improvement Project will establish and implement, in alignment with the comprehensive system of personnel development, program support services to significantly improve the performance and success of students with disabilities within the state. The project will work to improve basic skills performance for students with disabilities, increase the percentage of qualified teachers of students with disabilities, increase graduation rates and decrease drop-out rates of students with disabilities, and improve parent satisfaction with, and support of, school services.

*Method:* The administration and management of the project will be conducted through a collaborative educational partnership. A network of nine research-based training and demonstration centers will be established to demonstrate the implementation of research-proven approaches to the basic skills instruction and use of positive behavioral supports. These centers will provide training of trainers and resources in the use of research-proven methods for instruction in basic skills.

*Products:* The project will establish a system of continuous leadership training and support for school administrators, and a system of parent training and support. In combination with other state programs and resources, a system of recruitment and training support will be established to attract and retain special education teachers. An accountability system will also be established to measure the impact of the state improvement project and other restructuring and improvement efforts on the performance and success of students with disabilities.

*Grant Number:* H323A000013

## Illinois State Improvement Grant: Staff for Student Success

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* This statewide improvement project constitutes a coordinated system of professional development to assure that Illinois has an adequate supply of appropriately trained special education personnel to assure improved results for students with disabilities, and that the state has staff sufficiently prepared to work collaboratively with personnel in general education. Project activities will concentrate on increasing the availability and quality of services and identifying the personnel needed to maintain and support students with disabilities in the general curriculum and general education settings.

*Method:* The project will support a variety of personnel preparation and development activities, with a focus on local, regional, and state needs related to supplying an adequate number of individuals prepared to provide the kind of special education services outlined in IDEA '97 and in statewide educational reform. The project has two broad goals that address these needs: 1) In order to increase the number of appropriately trained and credentialed special education and related services personnel, meet student needs, and address identified geographic areas of shortage, Educator Academies will be set up in geographic areas that have substantial shortages of personnel. These academies will be linked to a school district but will include broad collaboration with colleges and universities and other education entities. 2) In order to provide a network of professional development that coordinates local, regional, and state resources with parents and educators who share responsibility for implementing an integrated service delivery model, Professional Development Academies will be set up with an interest in the quality of schools and the future work force. These academies will establish partnerships that will continue after the term of the grant. Town meetings will provide information for designing local personnel preparation and development initiatives that will have an impact on both goals.

*Products:* The project will establish a continuing system of professional development through the maintenance of Educator and Professional Development Academies and partnerships with professional organizations to recruit needed personnel who are appropriately trained and credentialed to deliver the necessary services for individuals with disabilities. The project will also work to expand higher education offerings to prepare personnel in accordance with the standards-led system, in partnership with local school districts and special education joint agreements. An increased number of parents, educators, and community members will be provided with current information and skills regarding improving results for individuals with disabilities. Through project efforts, more parents from diverse and traditionally underrepresented populations will be able to participate in the local and regional professional development offerings.

*Grant Number:* H323A000015

## Quality Education in the Last Frontier: Alaska's State Improvement Grant Proposal

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* The Quality Education in the Last Frontier (QELF) project, Alaska's state improvement grant, is designed to increase educational services and successful outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities. The QELF project will provide extra support and technical assistance as well as facilitate collaboration among its partners.

*Method:* The QELF project will advocate for full inclusion of students with disabilities in statewide education reform activities by providing training, resources, and technical assistance to school districts, parents, families, communities, and state agencies. The project will also increase cooperation among stakeholders and build the capacity of systemic structures currently in place. Innovative strategies will be used to improve the recruitment, training, and retention of paraeducators and professional educational personnel.

*Products:* Through project efforts, more students, including students with disabilities, will participate in activities related to Alaska's Quality Schools Initiative and other school reform efforts. Parents, families, and community members will participate in activities that promote student achievement. The project will develop and sustain effective partnerships with state agencies that provide services affecting students' educational achievement and will develop an infrastructure to recruit, train, and retain paraeducators. An evaluation program developed by the project will ensure the efficient use of federal, state, and local resources for project activities.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000016

## Minnesota Statewide Systems Change Alliance in Special Education

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* The Minnesota Statewide Systems Change Alliance is a collaborative partnership of parents, state and local education agencies, institutions of higher education, community service

providers, and other organizations committed to implementing initiatives that will lead to measurable changes in the statewide system of special education. The goal of the Alliance is to create a comprehensive, integrated service delivery system of highly skilled personnel who will work together, along with parents, to ensure that students with disabilities are provided full access to general education programs.

*Method:* To guide its activities, the Alliance has adopted a model based on information obtained from statewide needs assessments as well as strategic goals identified by parent and professional groups. The model reflects priorities in three areas: facilitating access to general education curriculum and achieving results; implementing a coordinated, multidisciplinary interagency service system; and ensuring the availability of a qualified special education workforce. These areas represent the general framework from which all professional development and dissemination initiatives have been designed and will be implemented.

*Products:* The cadre of trainers trained by the project will provide ongoing staff development to increase collaboration between general and special education within the state. The project will develop training modules that outline a process to help teachers include graduation standards in IEPs or individual interagency plans. An interagency task force created by the project, which includes parents, advocates, and representatives from state agencies, will work together to design a school and community change model emphasizing interactive mastery, verbal persuasion, and vicarious experience. This model will be developed into a training manual; other training publications will be created and dissemination activities conducted regarding assistive technology planning.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000017

## North Dakota State Improvement Grant Project

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* Through the systematic analysis of a wide range of needs assessment data, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and its State Improvement Grant (SIG) Partners have established three goals to improve the results for children and youth with disabilities: 1) to have the necessary personnel to ensure effective services for children and youth with disabilities; 2) to have preservice and professional development systems that will build capacity of general education, special education, educational administration, related services personnel, and families to ensure quality education for all students in the least restrictive settings; and 3) to have youth with disabilities attain positive post-school results through consistent statewide transition planning and implementation.

*Method:* To provide the necessary personnel with preservice and professional development, the SIG Partners will develop a coordinated approach to meeting these needs statewide, including participation of the Partners in a leadership academy, roundtables, and numerous collaborative training activities. Pilot sites will be selected for the training and they will receive support in planning and implementing comprehensive school improvement strategies that are data-based and support access to the general education curriculum for all students. The sites will serve as the geographic focus of training that will result in a cadre of field-based consultants and in an increase in local capacity to provide technical assistance to school personnel. Additionally, a roundtable of the Partners will offer minigrants for parent and family participation in various activities, including co-training.

*Products:* Building on existing resources, the project will provide multiple approaches for delivery of continued technical assistance and training for service providers in a rural state through use of electronic technology and interactive television. Formal mentoring relationships will sustain and support first-year special education teachers throughout the state in a Resident Teacher Program. A network of field-based consultants will be established in each region of the state, not limited to public school personnel, but inclusive of other agencies.

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*Grant Number:* H323A000019

## Oklahoma State Improvement Grant

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*Beginning Date:* 7/01/00
*Ending Date:* 6/30/05

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Oklahoma State Improvement Grant (SIG) is to promote a systems change effort to ensure that all personnel who work with children with disabilities are prepared and supported in providing a high quality education. The plan for Oklahoma's state improvement grant includes two major goals: 1) prepare children and youth with disabilities to meet the challenging state standards and make successful transitions to adult life through the establishment of a sustainable model of personnel preparation and professional development; and 2) ensure an adequate supply of qualified personnel to address regional shortages and to meet the needs of children and youth with disabilities by strengthening an infrastructure to support a comprehensive, coordinated system of recruitment, retention, and retraining activities.

*Method:* To achieve the first goal, multiple partnerships will be established between the state education agency (SEA), families, institutions of higher education (IHEs), local education agencies (LEAs), and communities, to more effectively prepare and support inclusive personnel at both the IHE and LEA levels through the redesign of the content and delivery of preservice personnel programs and the creation of regional professional development schools within LEAs. To achieve the second goal, existing recruitment, mentoring, and other teacher support activities will be expanded. A broad-based state level committee will be established to study issues in the area of recruit-

ment, retention, and retraining and make recommendations regarding special education and related service personnel needs in the state.

*Products:* The project will produce systems change in personnel preparation and significant improvement in Oklahoma's personnel development infrastructure. The overall model and strategies for achieving these goals are research-based and provide for translation of research to practice in personnel preparation.

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